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similar-looking to the Ape's Hill range, and the *Rover's Group* appear to have characters intermediate between the Pescadores and this. The Pescadores are mostly flat-topped islands, from 100 to 300 feet high, formed of trap and basaltic rock, the strata of the latter occurring in two or three layers with gravel between. *Pānghoo* island, viewed from the north-west has a cone-shaped hill, a little flattened at the top, with a small rock on its centre, and resembles in form a female's nippled breast. Table Island is conspicuously basaltic, the basalt being disposed side by side like stakes, a bundle of them peaking out on one side near the top. The rock is of a dark hue. Most of the islands have green tops, and are terraced for cultivation on every available side. Some of them have sandy beaches; the sand being white and gritty, like that of the China coast, and not black and fine like that of the Formosa shore.

"I cannot drop the subject of Formosa without saying a few words on the progress of the survey, under the attention of the man-of-war *Swallow* and *Dove* tender, which vessels (thanks to the kindly interposition of the Royal Geographical Society) the Hydrographic Office lost no time in detailing to our island. These two vessels did not, however, fairly commence the coast-line till April. The *Dove* first planned the coast south of this to the Cape, while the *Swallow* crossed over to Amoy for a supply of coal; then the *Dove* was left to map the harbour, while the *Swallow* explored the coast north of Taiwan. This last vessel, however, owing to the lateness of the season, did not get over much more than half the ground between Richards' and Gordon's surveys. Mr. E. Wild, Master commanding, was instructed to survey the treaty port of Taiwan, but considering that he could not much benefit the roadstead off Taiwanfoo by a special survey, he consented to devote a chart to Takow Harbour, which was much in need of a good survey. Mr. Stanley, commanding the *Dove*, has kindly given me a tracing of the Takow chart for my office, and Mr. Wilds has promised me similar tracings of the south and north coast, and Formosa Channel. The chart of Takow is an excellent piece of work, and shows that no labour has been spared to ensure its correctness. It comprises, besides the harbour, the approach from the sea."

2. Letter from Mr. R. B. N. Walker from the Gaboon.

MR. R. B. N. WALKER, who is exploring, under the auspices of the Society, the interior of Western Equatorial Africa, has at length set out on his journey from the Gaboon, and explains his prospects in the following letter to the Secretary :—

" Gaboon, W. Africa,
Dec. 23rd, 1865.

"SIR,

"After many delays and disappointments, I am at length able to inform you that the preparations for my departure are completed, and I propose crossing the river to join my guides and carriers on the 26th inst., and shall proceed into the interior immediately.

"My original plan of ascending the Bogwé Branch of this river to its source, and thence travelling by land, I have been compelled by circumstances to change; and now propose starting from the head of a creek called Obélo, on the southern side of this river, and crossing thence on foot in a south-east direction so as to strike the Ogowé or Nazareth (some 80 miles from my point of departure), in the Adjomba country, whence I shall proceed as directly eastward as circumstances will permit.

"This plan has two great advantages: in the first place, from all that can be learned from the natives, the Ogowé comes from a much greater distance inland than any other river in this neighbourhood, and very probably has its

source in the reported lake,* the discovery of which, and the determination of its position, are the first objects of my journey; and secondly, the Adjomba and other tribes inhabiting the region which I shall traverse for a considerable distance, and during a considerable portion of the time occupied by my journey, speak the Mpongwe language, thus rendering me quite independent of interpreters; a matter of no little importance in visiting for the first time a totally unknown country.

"The supplies I take with me will, I trust, enable me to remain at least a year in the interior; and I shall use every exertion to reach the lake, and travel over as great an extent of country as possible. I cannot presume to say what will be the distance I may be able to penetrate; but, if not so fully successful as I hope to be, I shall not be discouraged from making a second attempt with larger means.

"I am compelled to take more people with me than I originally contemplated, as I shall have not less than forty loads on leaving this; but as the coast people are more likely to prove a hindrance than otherwise, I shall send all but some eight or ten back from the Adjomba country, where I hope to obtain fresh carriers at a cheaper rate. Amongst the number of those who will accompany me during the whole of my journey is one pretty well practised in the preservation of objects of Natural History, so that I hope to be able to accomplish something in that branch of science.

"I am sorry to say that the aneroid having been injured accidentally, I had to send it to England to be repaired; I fully hope, however, that it will come out by this month's mail in time for me to receive it ere commencing my journey.

"Communication with the coast will, I fear, be impossible; but should an opportunity present itself, I shall not fail to give you information of my proceedings.

"R. B. N. WALKER, F.R.G.S."

3. *Journey into the Interior of Australia, North-West of the Great Bight.*

By Mr. E. A. DELISSEER.

(Communicated by Dr. F. MUELLER, F.R.G.S., Melbourne.)

"Melbourne, Dec. 16th, 1865.

"At your request I have the pleasure to forward you a short account of my late trip beyond the Great Australian Bight.

"The expedition which left Melbourne in January, 1865, under my command, had a double object to effect—to explore the country inland from the Bight, and to sink for fresh water on some claims taken by Messrs. Degraves & Co. near to Fowler's Bay and the head of the Bight. I started early in the year for the purpose of taking advantage of the earliest rains, but there was none until the first week in April: and although from that time until the first week of October we had sufficient rain along the coast, it did not penetrate into the interior beyond an average distance of 30 miles; but I don't think that this country suffered more than other parts of the continent from drought this year. While waiting for a general fall, I had wells sunk along the coast between Wahganyab and the Bight, and got good water at Coymbrā in some sand-hills on the coast within 18 miles from the Bight; thus making the journey between Fowler's Bay and the head of the Bight comparatively easy for packing up the provisions.

* This lake, reported by the natives to lie in the interior, east of the Gaboon, is estimated by Mr. Walker to be about 500 miles distant from the coast, and he thinks it likely a chain of lakes exists in this direction. A native had informed him that he had visited a lake, distant three months' journey from the head of the Gaboon, and so vast that the opposite shores were not visible. The discovery of these large sheets of water is the main object of Mr. Walker's expedition.—[Ed.]